



AMPTHILL URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

A N N U A L   R E P O R T

of the

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

and of the


PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR AND SURVEYOR

for the

YEAR 1972

Medical Officer of Health - W.C.V.BROTHWOOD, M.A., M.D., D.P.H.

Public Health Inspector and Surveyor -  
J.P.MEARS, M.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I.



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To: THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF  
THE AMPHILL URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit the Annual Report on the health and sanitary circumstances of the District for the year 1972.

The Vital Statistics compare very favourably with those of England and Wales in all respects, but not so with the Administrative County in respect of the Stillbirth and Infant Mortality Rates. The occurrence of one stillbirth and two infant deaths accounts for this. Happily, there was no maternal death connected with childbirth.

The Causes of Death table repeats a familiar pattern and its characteristic groupings are readily seen. Of 73 deaths 56 were in respect of persons 65 years of age and over. 49 of the total number of deaths were due to heart and circulatory diseases and 9 to cancer, including 4 of lung cancer.

There are two matters of environmental health to which I would like to refer, waste disposal and atmospheric pollution from brickworks. As regards the former, considerable alarm arose throughout the country when it became known that drums of dangerous cyanide compounds had been deposited at tips in the Midlands. This fact, together with the discovery of several drums which had contained chemicals - fortunately not of a dangerous type - at a tip in the area of a neighbouring authority, underlined the need for a continuation of the regular inspections which are made. With regard to atmospheric pollution from brickworks, renewed interest in the problem was shown towards the end of the year and an investigation of a special nature is about to take place.

There is a section on Infectious Diseases in the text of the Report, but it seems worth while recording here that 1972 was the first year in which it was necessary in this District to keep under observations persons who might have been in contact with cholera while abroad.

In the introduction to last years Annual Report I mentioned the impending reorganisation of Local Government and the National Health Service and I drew attention to the importance which was being attached to collaboration between the authorities which would come into being on the 1st April 1974. In the case of Bedfordshire they are the new County Council, the new District Councils and the Area Health Authority, with its two Health Districts, one based on Bedford and the other on Luton. In order to secure the necessary collaboration there are to be statutory joint consultative committees, one covering social services and education and the other covering environmental health. The importance of housing is recognised and it has been recommended that housing matters should be discussed in relation both to environmental health and social services. In the introduction I also indicated that one form of collaboration would be for the District Councils to appoint as medical advisers ("proper officers") doctors employed as Community Physicians by the Area Health Authority at Health District level. It has been well said that health is essentially a single problem for the community as a whole. Such appointments would greatly facilitate the approach to the problem. On the one hand, as an employee of the Area Health Authority, the doctor would be a member of a team concerned with personal health services, and on the other, as an employee of the District Council, he would be a member of a team concerned with environmental health.





In the text of the Report I have mentioned some of the health services provided by the Council in their capacity as Local Health Authority. These services, together with those of the District Councils, form a broad base of operations for the prevention of illness and the maintenance and promotion of health. The fact that there is a division of responsibility for providing the services has in no way prevented that joint action by officers of the County Council and the District Councils, which is so often necessary. I acknowledge with gratitude the co-operation of the County Medical Officer and his staff in matters of mutual concern, and his sympathetic understanding of health problems in the Districts. I am particularly grateful to him for the comprehensive nature of the action he took in the County during the recent smallpox episode.

In conclusion, I express my sincere thanks to the members of the Council for the consideration they have continued to show me and to the Clerk and Public Health Inspector and their staffs for their ready co-operation and support.

I am,

Your obedient servant,

W.C.V.BROTHWOOD

Medical Officer of Health.



AMPTHILL URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT  
of the  
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH  
for 1972

1. OFFICERS OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Medical Officer of Health - W.C.V.BROTHWOOD, M.A., M.D., D.P.H.

Surveyor,  
Public Health Inspector  
and Housing Manager - J.P.MEARS, M.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I.

2. GENERAL STATISTICS RELATING TO THE DISTRICT

Area (in acres) .. .. . 1,904 acres.

Population:

Census for 1971 .. .. . 5,575

Registrar General's estimate of  
home population, mid-year 1972 .. .. . 5,750

Number of inhabited houses .. .. . 1,920

Rateable value (1st April 1973).. .. . £689,905

Sum represented by a Penny Rate (to 31.3.73) £6,500





### 3. VITAL STATISTICS

<u>Live Births</u>					<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Legitimate	..	..	..	..	61	57	118
Illegitimate	..	..	..	..	1	1	2
				Totals	62	58	120
Crude Birth Rate	..		20.9	per 1,000 home population			
Adjusted Birth Rate	..		19.0	" " "			
(The comparability factor for the District being .91)							
As compared with -							
Adjusted Rate for Bedfordshire			16.2	per 1,000 home population			
Rate for England and Wales			14.8	" " "			
<u>Still Births</u>					<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Legitimate	..	..	..	..	-	1	1
Illegitimate	..	..	..	..	-	-	-
				Totals	-	1	1
Still Birth Rate	..		8.0	per 1,000 total (live and still births)			
As compared with -							
Rate for Bedfordshire			7.9	" "			
Rate for England and Wales			12.0	" "			
<u>Deaths</u>					<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Deaths in the District	..	..			27	14	41
Transferred into the District		..			13	21	34
Transferred from the District		..			1	1	2
				Totals	39	34	73
Crude Death Rate			12.7	per 1,000 home population			
Adjusted Death Rate			8.9	" " "			
(The comparability factor for the District being .70)							
As compared with:							
Adjusted Rate for Bedfordshire			10.3	per 1,000 home population			
Rate for England and Wales			12.1	" " "			
<u>Deaths of Infants under One year of age.</u>							
					<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Legitimate	..	..	..	..	1	1	2
Illegitimate	..	..	..	..	-	-	-
				Totals	1	1	2
Infant Mortality Rate			17.0	per 1,000 related live births			
As compared with -							
Rate for Bedfordshire			13.3	" " "			
Rate for England and Wales			17.0	" " "			
<u>Deaths connected with Childbirth</u>							
Maternal Mortality	..		Nil				



CAUSES OF DEATH AT DIFFERENT PERIODS OF LIFE DURING 1972

Cause of Death	Total all ages.		Under 4 weeks		4 weeks & under 1 year		1-4		5-14		Age in years												75 & over	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	15-24		25-34		35-44		45-54		55-64		65-74		M	F
											M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F		
Other tuberculosis	-	1						1																
Malignant neoplasms, intestine	-	2																						
Malignant neoplasm, lung	3	1																						
Bronchus																								
Other malignant neoplasms	2	1																						
Diabetes mellitus	1	-																						
Multiple sclerosis	1	1																						
Other diseases of nervous system	3	-																						
Hypertensive disease	2	-																						
Ischaemic heart disease	17	7																						
Other forms of heart disease	4	4																						
Cerebrovascular disease	3	11																						
Other diseases of circulatory system	-	1																						
Influenza	1	-																						
Other diseases of respiratory system	1	1																						
Peptic Ulcer	-	2																						
Intestinal obstruction and hernia	-	1		1																				
Other causes of perinatal mortality	1	-		1																				
All other accidents	-	1																						
Total all Causes	39	34	1	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	2	-	7	2	12	7	15	22	





4. GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH AND MEDICAL SERVICES IN THE AREA

The Bedfordshire County Council provides:

- (a) through its Health Committee the following services, amongst others, - Health Centres, Care of Mothers and Young Children, Health Visiting, Home Nursing, Domiciliary Midwifery, Ambulance, Immunisation against Infectious Diseases;
- (b) through its Education Committee, a School Health Service;
- (c) through its Social Services Committee, personal social services.

The Bedfordshire and Luton Executive Council provides the Family Practitioner Services.

The North West Metropolitan Regional Hospital Board provides consultant and hospital services.

5. PREVALENCE AND CONTROL OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE

Much is achieved in the prevention of infectious disease by immunisation. Diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus and poliomyelitis are dealt with in the first year of life and necessary re-inforcement doses are given at about five years of age. Immunisation against measles takes place in the second year of life. Consideration is being given to the feasibility of immunising at the age of five years those who missed vaccination earlier.

Vaccination against rubella is offered as a routine to girls reaching their twelfth year and there are arrangements, with prescribed safeguards, for vaccination of women of child-bearing age.

B.C.G. vaccination is offered, where appropriate, to children at the age of thirteen years.

There are also certain activities of officers of the Public Health Department which are important in the prevention and control of infectious diseases. They are most readily recognisable in outbreaks of vomiting and diarrhoea and the rigid surveillance of persons returning from abroad who have been in contact with infectious diseases, especially typhoid and cholera.

Tables (a) and (b), which follow, have been in use for many years, but material in them now seems hardly sufficient to warrant their continued use. They serve, however, as a reminder of the times when things were very different.

Table (a) sets out the notifications received. There are several significant features about the table. First, there is a continued absence of diphtheria and poliomyelitis. This fact accurately reflects the success of immunisation against these diseases. Second, there are no cases of food poisoning or dysentery. This fact is a clear indication of the value of the food hygiene measures taken by the public health inspectorate and others. Third, the number of cases of measles fell from 92 in 1971 to 3 in 1972. Measles is known to behave capriciously but there can be no reasonable doubt that vaccination is decreasing the incidence of the disease. In the year 1971 thirty-eight per cent of the children eligible





under the scheme were vaccinated. The percentage in 1972 was over sixty and consideration is now being given to the feasibility of offering vaccination to those children who were not vaccinated during their second year.

Table (b). Notwithstanding the relatively satisfactory situation shown, there is still a need for "continued alertness in diagnosis, efficient treatment and thorough follow-up of the patient and his contacts". The proof of this lies in the fact that although the national total of deaths in 1971 was the lowest ever recorded it still is higher than that of any other notifiable infectious disease and notifications of the disease reveal a relatively unchanged situation during the last year.

(a) Notification by Age Group:

Disease	0 - 4	5 - 14	15 and over	Age unknown	Total
Measles	3	-	-	-	3
Scarlet fever	-	1	-	-	1

(b) Tuberculosis, in Age Groups:

Age	New Cases				Deaths			
	Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary		Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Under 1 yr	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1 - 5 yrs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
5 - 15 yrs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
15 - 35 yrs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
35 - 65 yrs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Over 65 yrs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Number on Register at End of Year:

				Male	Female
Pulmonary	..	..	..	4	1
Non-Pulmonary				-	1

Mass Radiography

A mobile x-ray unit, provided by the Mass Radiography Service of the Regional Hospital Board, continues to visit The Sands, Woburn Street, Ampthill on Thursday each week from 12.00 to 12.15 p.m. During this period patients sent by general practioners can be x-rayed.

6. CLEANSING OF VERMINOUS PERSONS

Cases requiring attention are normally school children with head lice infestations and these are dealt with by the Health Visitors as a matter of routine.

7. NATIONAL ASSISTANCE ACT 1948 - Section 47

Section 47 of the National Assistance Act provides for the removal to hospital or Part III accommodation on a Court Order, of sick or old people who are unable to look after themselves. It was not found necessary to use this legislation for the compulsory removal of any person during the year.





## 8. ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

### (a) Water Supply

Adequate supplies of water have been maintained throughout the district by the Bedfordshire Water Board. The Ampthill Urban District is supplied from the Clophill Borehole, with a small part from the Great Ouse Water Authority pipeline.

#### Chemical Analysis of Treated Water from Borehole Supplies (Average Analysis of Samples taken weekly)

						<u>Clophill</u>
Temperature °C	..	..	..	..	..	11.0
Turbidity (A.T.U.)	..	..	..	..	..	0.1
Colour (Hazen Units)	..	..	..	..	..	Nil
Electrical Conductivity (micromhos per ml at 20°C)						725
pH	..	..	..	..	..	7.80
Ammoniacal Nitrogen	..	..	..	..	..	Nil
Albuminoid Nitrogen	..	..	..	..	..	less than 0.01
Nitrate Nitrogen	..	..	..	..	..	0.09
Chloride as Cl	..	..	..	..	..	32
Carbonate Hardness as CaCO <sub>3</sub>	..	..	..	..	..	242
Non-Carbonate Hardness as CaCO <sub>3</sub>	..	..	..	..	..	103
Total Hardness as CaCO <sub>3</sub>	..	..	..	..	..	345
Calcium Hardness as CaCO <sub>3</sub>	..	..	..	..	..	293
Magnesium Hardness as CaCO <sub>3</sub>	..	..	..	..	..	52
Free Carbon Dioxide	..	..	..	..	..	8
Sulphate as SO <sub>4</sub>	..	..	..	..	..	98
Iron as Fe	..	..	..	..	..	0.02
Sodium as Na	..	..	..	..	..	16
Potassium as K	..	..	..	..	..	4.0
Manganese as Mn	..	..	..	..	..	less than 0.01
Fluoride as F	..	..	..	..	..	0.35
Silica as SiO <sub>2</sub>	..	..	..	..	..	22
Phosphate as PO <sub>4</sub>	..	..	..	..	..	less than 0.05
Lead as Pb	..	..	..	..	..	less than 0.01
Copper as Cu	..	..	..	..	..	less than 0.10
Zinc as Zn	..	..	..	..	..	less than 0.02
Dissolved Oxygen % Saturation	..	..	..	..	..	41
Oxygen Absorbed from N/80 KMnO <sub>4</sub> in 4 hours at 27°C						0.06

### (b) Drainage and Sewerage

The Sewage Disposal Works are sited at Abbey Lane and consist of the following - Detritus and Sedimentation tanks, rotary percolating filters, humus tanks, storm water overflows and sludge beds. The treated effluent discharges into the "Running Waters" Brook, which enters the River Flitt.

A number of effluent samples taken by the River Board's Officers were in the main found to be unsatisfactory but due to the successful operation of the upward flow clarifiers in the humus tanks, the degree of pollution was improved. Consideration is being given to the discharge of all sewage within the Urban District to the enlarged works at Flitwick by a new trunk sewer thus making the Abbey Lane works obsolete.

No case of flooding of foul water sewers was reported during the year.

### (c) Rivers and streams.

The only case of serious pollution is at Running Waters due to the discharge from the Poultry Processers at Doolittle Mill. Consideration is still being pursued with a view to connecting to main drainage.





(d) Cesspools, Pail Closets

The number of domestic properties with either cesspools or septic tanks has been reduced to 43. One property occupied by one person only relies solely on a pail closet.

(e) Public Cleansing

The collection and disposal of house refuse continues to be most satisfactorily carried out by Contractors utilising the bin liner system.

The Council does not operate a cesspool cleansing service, occupiers of premises drained to cesspools and septic tanks make their own private arrangements for emptying.

(f) Salvage

The collection of wastepaper and card is not considered an economic proposition and therefore no separate collection is made.

(g) Sanitary Inspection of Area

The following is a summary of the sanitary and other defects dealt with during the year -

Premises with defective and insanitary closets	..	..	2
Premises with insanitary and defective drains	..	..	7
Premises with insufficient sanitary accommodation	..	..	-
Premises with insanitary and defective cesspools	..	..	2
Premises with defective windows, insufficient light and ventilation	..	..	-
Premises with defective floors	..	..	-
Dirty Premises	..	..	-
Dangerous structure	..	..	-
Accumulations of offensive matter	..	..	-
Unsound meat and other foods	..	..	33
Rooms disinfected for bed bugs etc. and infectious disease..			1
Nuisance from rats and mice	..	..	134
Other dilapidations	..	..	-
Number of Statutory Notices served	..	..	-
Number of Informal Notices served	..	..	5
Number of defective premises	..	..	5

(h) Shops and Offices

No Statutory action was taken in connection with the Offices, Shops and Railway Premises Act, 1963.

(i) Caravans, Moveable Dwellings, Camping Sites etc.

No applications were received for caravans or movable dwellings during the year. There are no permanent sites for moveable dwellings or camping situated within the Urban District.

(j) Smoke abatement

A few complaints were received from residents in the vicinity of industrial premises, but on investigation, though these were of a troublesome nature, they did not constitute a statutory nuisance and therefore no formal action was necessary. The owners of the industrial premises concerned were approached informally on this matter.

(k) Disinfestation (Not rodent control)

No treatments were necessary.



9. HOUSING

Twenty private houses were completed and occupied, these being on the Warren Farm, Coppins and Ashburnham Road estates.

The following Plans were approved under Building Regulations -

- 12 Alterations to Commercial and Industrial Premises.
- 68 Alterations to Domestic Premises.
- 18 Private Garages and Carports.
- 9 Conservatories and Porches.
- 3 Alterations to Public Hall, Sports Pavilions, etc.
- 2 New Domestic Dwellings.
- 1 Small Private Residential Estate of 13 Dwellings.

Town and Country Planning

One hundred and thirty nine Applications under the Town and Country Planning Act were received, of which 66 were approved, 45 refused, 8 withdrawn, 3 deemed planning consents and 17 deferred.

Two Applications under the Advertisement Regulations were received, one of which was refused and one deferred.

10. RODENT CONTROL

The Council has continued to employ the retired Operator on a part-time basis, which has proved most satisfactory.

11. INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD

Number of premises handling food and visits made thereto -

(a) <u>Shops</u>					<u>Premises</u>	<u>Visits Made</u>
1.	Ice Cream Vendors .. .. .				13	21
2.	Bakers and Confectioners.. ..				9	16
3.	Grocers .. .. .				6	14
4.	Fishmongers .. .. .				1	4
5.	General Stores .. .. .				4	10
6.	Butchers .. .. .				5	15
7.	Dairies and retail milk distributors				2	7
(b) <u>Vans, Stalls and Hawkers</u> .. ..					5	8
(c) <u>Catering Establishments</u>						
1.	Restaurants and Cafes .. ..				2	9
2.	Industrial Canteens .. ..				3	9
3.	School Canteens .. ..				5	11
4.	Hotels .. ..				1	3
5.	Outside catering contractors ..				-	-
6.	Fish and chip shops .. ..				1	3
7.	Chicken Barbeque .. ..				1	4
8.	Chinese Take-Away .. ..				1	7
(d) <u>Manufacturing Establishments</u>						
1.	Sausage Makers .. ..				5	16
2.	Meat pie and cooked meat makers.				5	16
3.	Bakehouses .. ..				-	-
4.	Ice Cream Makers .. ..				-	-
5.	Confectionery Manufacturers ..				-	-
6.	Others .. ..				-	-

(e) Milk Supply (Milk and Dairies Regulations, 1949

Milk (Special Designation) Regulations 1949-54)

There are now no separate milk retailers of milk in the district though a number of the larger food shops and supermarkets retail milk. Only one dairy situated outside the district retails milk on a house to house basis within the Urban area.





(f) Unfit Foods

The following foodstuffs were condemned as unfit for human consumption -

5,377 lbs. Chicken and Chicken Meat  
197 lbs. Frozen Meat.  
114 lbs. Frozen Foods and Vegetables.  
139 Pkts. Mousse and Ice Cream.  
62 lbs. Frozen Fish.

Tinned food and groceries which are usually condemned in small quantities are collected and buried at the Council's refuse tip. Condemned meat at the Butchers Shops and Poultry Processing premises is always stained with condemned meat dye before collection by processing firms.

(g) Butchers Shops (all registered under S.16 Food and Drugs Act 1955)

The five Butchers Shops have been regularly inspected and are maintained in a good condition, all complying with the Food Hygiene Regulations.

(h) Ice Cream Registrations

Thirteen premises are registered for the sale of ice-cream, all of which are licensed to sell a pre-packed article. No samples were taken during the year by this Department.

(i) Food Hygiene Regulations

Regular inspections were carried out to ensure the Regulations were being complied with.

(j) Poultry Processing Establishments

There is only one establishment within the Urban District where poultry processing is carried out. The number of birds processed during the year was 1,071,979 (Chickens 62,640, Capons 1,677, Boiling Fowls 1,006,512, Turkeys 1,150).

No regular routine inspections are carried out by the Council's Officers but spot inspections and checks are made. The staff employed at the Plant carry out their own routine inspections. No accurate records are kept on the number of birds rejected as unfit for human consumption but the weight of poultry condemned during the year by this Department was 5,377 lbs.

The actual number of visits made to the premises was 78 and the hygiene of the premises, management and employees is satisfactory.

There are still problems with regard to effluent, which have been mentioned elsewhere in this Report.





12. PREScribed PARTICULARS ON THE ADMINISTRATION  
OF THE FACTORIES ACT, 1961

- (a) Inspections for purposes of provisions as to health  
(including inspections made by Public Health Inspectors)

	Number on Register	Number of -		
		Inspec- tions.	Written Notices	Occupiers prosecuted
1. Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 & 6 are to be enforced by Local Authority.	3	5		
2. Factories not included in (1) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority.	22	27		
3. Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority. * excluding outworkers premises.	4	10		
Total	29	42		

\* Institutions, Section 124 and sites of building operations  
and works of engineering construction, Section 127



(b) CASES IN WHICH DEFECTS WERE FOUND

(if defects are discovered at the premises on two, three or more separate occasions they should be reckoned as two, three or more 'cases').

Particulars	Number of cases Found Remedied	Defects to H.M. Inspec- tor.	Found by H.M. Insp:	Number of cases in which pros- ecutions were instituted.
Want of Cleanliness (s.1)				
Overcrowding (s.2)				
Unreasonable temperature (s.3)				
Inadequate ventilation (s.4)				
Ineffective drainage of floors (s.6)				
Sanitary Conveniences (s.7)				
(a) Insufficient	1	1		
(b) Unsuitable or defective	1	1		
(c) Not separate for sexes	-	-		
Other offences against the Acts (not including offences relating to outwork)				
Total	2	2		

PART VIII OF THE ACT - OUTWORK

Sections 133 & 134.

	Section 133			Section 134		
Nature of Work.	No. of out workers in August list required by Section 133 (1) (c)	No. of cases of default in sending lists to Council.	No. of prosecutions for failure to supply lists.	No. of instances of work in unwholesome premises.	Notices served.	Prosecutions.
Wearing apparel making etc.	5	-	-	-	-	-

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